

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4255

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, SWEL, PINS, CPRS, ET

SUBJECT: PRESENT OPERATIONS OF LALMBA ORPHANAGE IN KEREN

REF: ASMARA 0977

1. TO OBTAIN FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE CURRENT OPERATION OF THE LALMBA ORPHANAGE IN KEREN, DPO CONTACTED THE DIRECTOR OF THE ORPHANAGE, TEKIE ALIBEKIT, WHO WAS IN ASMARA FOR A BRIEF VISIT. AS TEKIE WAS RELUCTANT TO VISIT THE CONSULATE, HE WAS INTERVIEWED AT THE HOME OF A MUTUAL FRIEND.

2. ACCORDING TO TEKIE, THE OCCUPATION OF THE ORPHANAGE BY EPMG TROOPS OCCURRED ONLY DURING A SHORT PERIOD IN AUGUST 1976 WHEN THE ORPHANS/STUDENTS WERE VACATIONING WITH RELATIVES. OBJECTIONS BY THE ORPHANAGE STAFF TO THE TROOPS PRESENCE RESULTED IN THE SOLDIERS BEING WITHDRAWN FROM THE PREMISES. THE TROOPS HAVE NOT RETURNED SINCE AND THERE HAVE BEEN NO FURTHER EPMG PRESSURES ON THE INSTITUTION.

3. THERE ARE CURRENTLY SOME 90 ORPHANS AT THE INSTITUTION, AND NO NEW ORPHANS ARE BEING ACCEPTED. THE ORPHANAGE'S FINANCIAL SITUATION IS CONTINUING TO BE UNDERMINED BY SPIRALING INFLATION. THE STAFF WAS SUCCESSFUL, HOWEVER, IN HAVING SOME \$6,000 WORTH OF SUPPLIES INCLUDED IN THE ROAD CONVOY WHICH ARRIVED IN KEREN NOV 27. THE INSTITUTION HAS MADE AN APPEAL TO THE REMAINING AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN ASMARA FOR SUPPORT, ESPECIALLY FOR THE PURCHASE OF ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT.

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4. ON BEING TOLD THAT THE CONGEN RECEIVES OCCASSIONAL INQUIRIES
ABOUT HIS OPERATION, TEKIE PROMISED TO INFORM US PERIODICALLY
ON DEVELOPMENTS AT THE ORPHANAGE.
SLUTZ

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